CHAPTER FOURTEEN

The Debacle

The Ukrainian Communists, as Skrypnyk and Khvylovy, could not fail to be horrified at the spreading famine which broke out in the autumn of 1932 and raged throughout the winter. Whatever they might have thought in the beginning of the compulsory collectivization, they were aghast at its results. They could not fail to recognize that it meant the end of the old Ukrainian life which they had tried to remodel in accordance with their own ideals and that it meant a widening breach with the outside world. They could not fail to see that it meant the ending of that world Communism in which they had tried to believe and in which they saw the hope of humanity and justice.

They could hardly fail to recognize almost immediately how they had played into the hands of the enemies of Ukraine by their attacks on the older scholars, for they were now to learn that they had unwittingly forged the tool that was to be used against them.

Postyshev arrived in Ukraine in January, 1933, to superintend and make more rigid the rules for the collection of grain. He brought with him his own staff, his own detachments of the NKVD, and while he nominally had the post of second secretary, he had the instructions from Stalin that made him the complete dictator. He soon showed what that meant.

Among his earliest acts was the removal of Chubar from his post as head of the Soviet of People's Commissars and he replaced him with the more pliable P. Lyubchenko, a former Borotbist. Skrypnyk was forthwith demoted from Commissar of Education to Chairman of the Ukrainian State Planning Commission, a position of no special importance, once the conduct of all Ukrainian life

was to be administered in accordance with a plan drawn up in Moscow. He was replaced by Volodymyr Zatonsky, who had been one of the foremost advocates of russification.

The axe was used still more widely on the entire Communist Party in Ukraine. Within ten months, Postyshev removed two hundred thirty-seven secretaries of regional party committees, two hundred seventy-nine heads of regional executive committees, and one hundred and fifty-eight heads of regional control commissions. Nearly one thousand prominent Communists were removed, not to speak of lesser members. Since there were little more than 125,000 Communists in Ukraine, it is easy to see that a large proportion of the Party was unceremoniously eliminated. Elimination meant not only demotion but it was practically a death sentence, for those expelled were charged with that most serious crime against the state, bourgeois nationalism or sabotage, and the vast majority were either shot or deported.

Postyshev turned his attention to the Academy of Sciences which had already been purged of its leading members. Here he found some two hundred and fifty more who were removed on charges of Ukrainian chauvinism or sabotage. In their place, he introduced ordinary Communists or Russians with more regard to their reliability and their loyalty to Stalin than to their capability or scholarly qualifications.

Postyshev's object was the rerussification of the country, for it had already been commented in Moscow that there were too many of the young Ukrainians who were securing an education only in Ukrainian without knowing the master language of Russian. Skrypnyk had paid no attention to these complaints, for he retorted that in Moscow the young Russians were not learning Ukrainian and he assumed that all the Soviet Republics had the same rights. He was soon to learn differently, for from now on Russian was to be the official language of widest use.

In every considerable city Postyshev established Russian newspapers which had almost completely vanished during the period of Ukrainization. He opened Russian schools in the leading cities and he introduced Russian into all the other schools on an equality

Muscoviam, Before and After Moscow). If the before was leading up to a Moscow discovery, it was good; if not, it was bad. 814 665

This was proclaimed by Zhdanov of the Politbiuro in 1946 [546] when, under the highest auspices, he began his attack. On September 4 of that year, at a meeting of the Umiom of Soviet Writers in Moscow, he lashed out at various films which had been recently produced and at several Russian authors, especially Zoshchenko and Anna Akhmatova, for not producing a true picture of Soviet reality. Then, warming to his task, he explicitly declared that literature had to be entirely at the service of the Communist Party and that it was the duty of every Soviet writer to lash and scourge the decadent bourgeois west. He berated many of the authors for wishing to learn from the bourgeois writers at the very moment when Soviet literature, the most revolutionary literature in the world, was a hundred times higher and more beautiful than the literature of the bourgeois west. 538 626 665

The speech of Zhdanov was the open proclamation of war against all foreign influences in Soviet literature and it was directed against some of the most respected figures, who were apparently silenced. Even Tikhonov was removed from his post at the head of the Union of Soviet Writers for not having exerted himself more strongly against these dangerous heresies. [558]

Yet this speech was not really the beginning, for some weeks before the question was fully brought into the open, at a meeting of the KP/b/U, Khrushchov, the Russian who held the post as First Secretary of the KP/b/U, had received from the Executive Committee of the Communist Party in Moscow full and definite instructions as to the means to be adopted for purging Ukrainian literature and science and for suppressing all traces of bourgeois nationalism. His remarks were reprinted in part by *Pravda* in Moscow, which summarized them in these words.

"The TsK KP/b/U had not paid sufficient attention to ideological work, does not give enough weight to the selecting and the ideological and political education of the cadres in the fields of science, literature and art, has not organized in the press a wide criticism of the hostile bourgeois-nationalist ideology. As a result

186 Ukraine, demanded that the Communist Party stopped its policy of
665 Russification of the Ukrainian workers. On May 12, 1926, Shumsky declared at a session of the Politburo of the Central Committee of the CP of Ukraine:

"In the Party, the Russian Communists are ruling, who treat the Ukrainian Communists with distrust and enmity".

In a letter to the Central Committee of he CP of Ukraine of February 1927, Shumsky wrote: "The Ukrainian Communist feels himself indeed a stepson of the Party".

●[558] For this 'deviation' the top institutions of the Communist Party resolutely condemned Shumsky. He was deprived of his office and sent to Russia.

656 A new 'deviation' was detected in the CP of Ukraine in 1928.
186 The Communist Volobuyev showed in his articles that economi-
687 cally Ukraine was a Russian colony. He demanded for Ukraine the securing of a free economic development. Volobuyev published figures which proved that Ukraine was giving Russia almost 1/3 of her incomes without equivalent. He pointed out that Russia was sending workers from Russia into Ukraine, thus artifically creating a majority of Russian elements in the Ukrainian industrial centres (*The Bolshevik of Ukraine*, No. 3: Kharkov, 1928). Volobuyev was punished alike for this 'nationalist deviation'.

186 In spite of all these difficulties and hindrances created by the
517 Russian Government for the development of Ukrainian culture, the time of 'Ukrainisation' gave some gains for cultural Ukrainian progress, even in the conditions of the Communist dictatorship: Ukrainian shools — elementary, secondary and academic — had been organised; the Ukrainian Academy of Science developed its work extensively. In a few years of cultural work the cadres of a
[538] new Ukrainian intelligentsia were created. The Ukrainian literary production developed in spite of all obstacles on the part of the Soviet régime. The protest against the oppression of Ukraine by Moscow appeared also in the Ukrainian literature: a trend arose in the Ukrainian literature with orientation towards the free civilisation of Western Europe, against Russian Communist rule (the Communist Khvylyovy). Against such 'heresy' Moscow acted with ruthless repressions.

4. Ukraine in the Time of the First Five Years Plan (1929—1934)

185 The policy of collectivisation and industrialisation started in 1929 with enormous demands on Ukrainian national economy. Moscow used the Ukrainian national economy predominantly for

[1. Alexander Shumsky, Commissar of Education -- Analyst]

11: Obermaier--87 J-3(no date)1942 RD1 Ukraine RD1

[Galicia]* [Volhynia]

Galicia and Volhynia bore the main burden of 668
the struggle of nationalities. The fight was carried on in a legal manner through self-supporting organizations such as economic cooperative societies, private schools and societies of public interest, and illegally through revolutionary secret organizations threatening the state. The first of these secret societies was the "Ukrainian Military Organization" (UVO). Its members were primarily soldiers of the former West Ukrainian army. A second sabotage organization, that of the Communists, worked hand in glove with the UVO. The UVO was /86/ dissolved in 1928 by Polish agents, which was not a particularly clever achievement, considering the poverty of its members. The same happened to the Ukrainian Communists at the hands of delegated Jews who acted upon orders from the Warsaw office of the Komintern. Meanwhile a new terroristic secret society had been formed, the "Organization of Ukrainian Nationalists" (OUN), which has caused the Polish authorities the greatest concern, especially since October 1938. All attempts to dissolve the OUN from within or to neutralize it by creating groups of Polonophiles have failed. Elements that could be bought were often enough obliged to pay for their treason with death.

Two years after the founding of the OUN* in 668
late summer of 1930, the farms and estates of Polish settlers in Galicia went up in flames and 679
in some places the harvest burned up in the fields. Also, telegraph wires were cut. Since it was hard to sell grain, Polish landowners used the terrorist methods of the OUN in individual regions as an excuse to collect insurance fraudulently; they set fire to their own buildings. The answer of the Poles to the wave of sabotage of the OUN* 558
can be read between the lines of the petition of 60 members of the British House of Commons to the

* [i.e., Ukrainian Terroristic Secret Society - Analyst]

[Galicia] [Volhynia]

558 League of Nations: "With special reference to recent uprisings in East Galicia, we recognize the right and the necessity of the Polish government to maintain order within its boundaries. However, we should like to point out the fact which, coinciding as it does with an eye-witness account, seems indisputable, namely, that penal expeditions were sent out to at least 700 villages, even though against the majority of them no evidence of terroristic or unconstitutional action could be produced, that hundreds of men, women and children were beaten - some of the procedures were so cruel that the victims were bedridden for weeks thereafter, some were crippled for life and some were killed. Thousands of people were arrested and many libraries, clubs /87/ and cooperative shops were plundered and destroyed. The fourteenth cavalry regiment in particular seems to have loosed its reins in the villages; they punished the peasants indiscriminately. These actions against the Ukrainian minority seem to be a violation of Article One which states: 'Poland agrees to guarantee all inhabitants without distinction as to birth, nationality, language, race or religion, full and complete protection of life and liberty...'"

An investigation on the spot by the International Women's League showed the following: "...One terrible feature of the whole procedure was the refusal to grant medical attention to the victims. The doctors were forbidden to leave the cities and go into the villages. The peasants who undertook to travel to the cities for medical treatment were sent back by the police. In many cases the wounds became gangrenous and death or lifelong suffering were the results." The Chicago Daily News observed at that time: "Under the guidance of an iron hand Poland is steering toward its magnificent future." (49)

49. Quoted by Svystun: Ukraine, the Poorest Spot of Europe, pages 32, 20, 26.

[Galicia] [Volhynia]

668 of Polish agitation for dissolution and the Charybdis of Ukrainian nationalism, declared itself willing to work with Poland provided autonomy was granted and a status of "legal competence" was established. On May ninth the UNDO in the Sejm adopted the authorization law for the president of the state, in order not to give Poland an excuse for dissolving the cooperatives.

558 In the summer of 1939 the Polish-Ukrainian relationship resembled a sort of guerilla war. Here and there a house was set on fire, a bullet through a window found its victim, Polish colonists or officials were driven out of a village, a police raid was shot down - and in turn, the Polish bayonets raged mercilessly. To take only two cases at random: on May 8, 1939 Ukrainian representatives in the Sejm placed an interpellation before the Minister of the Interior, according to which the Polish police had seriously injured 16 persons, among them 8 women and girls, with blows administered with the butt end of a gun, at a funeral in an East Galician village. On the same day police officials in the district of Polyana killed a Ukrainian peasant and an eleven-year-old boy by shooting. Several Ukrainians were injured. In a second interpellation there was a complaint that in Libukhora in East Galicia a first lieutenant, a sergeant major and a soldier coerced by means of blows, the cashier and acting head of the Ukrainian library to burn the library which consisted of 300 volumes. On May ninth the Polish Prime Minister, General Skladovski, replied to another Ukrainian interpellation of April twenty-ninth. There were three incidents mentioned: a military assault on the dwelling of the Ukrainian pastor Tustanovich in Komarnyky, a military attack in Zalisci on 63 Ukrainians who were maltreated, and the maltreatment by the police of 17 Ukrainian peasants in Cholhyni. In all three cases the Polish Premier's answers were evasive.

539 Untold hosts of hirelings.
And tears? Blood? Verily enough
To sate all czars,
To drown them and their progeny
In widows' tears... The tears of maidens
Shed throughout full nights of longing,
The burning pain of mothers' tears,
Our hoary fathers' tears of blood
No stream could hold, - ah no,
A sea, a fiery sea!... Oh honor
To all dogs and tyrants
And to the Czar, our little father."(55)

55. "Taras Shevchenko" in Beiträge zur Ukrainekunde, Number 6, Berlin 1937.

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177 The political concept of an "indivisible
558 Russia" suggests the suppression of all Ukrainian movements toward independence, even if they be merely of a cultural nature. In accordance with this, and on the basis of the principle followed by the Russian Minister of Education Valuiev: "There is no separate Little Russian language, there never was and never can be", Moscow issued a general printed statement prohibiting all /103/ Ukrainian writings. Ukrainian culture which is 700 years older than the Muscovite culture based on it was simply declared invalid. Belletristic works by Ukrainian pens may appear only in Russian spelling. All writing was sharply censured, concerts, lectures and theatrical performances were forbidden. Later the theatrical prohibition was relaxed a bit, but for each Ukrainian play a Russian one of equal length had to be performed. Since members of the higher classes would be unrefined if they spoke Ukrainian, actors portraying persons from cultivated circles has to speak only Russian even to Ukrainian plays.